R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 011 541 UD 002 913

THE NONPROFESSIONAL IN SOCIAL WELFARE--DIMENSIONS AND ISSUES.

BY- DENHAM, WILLIAM H.

PUB DATE 2 DEC 66

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.09 HC-$1.00 25P.

DESCRIPTORS- *NONPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL, *SOCIAL WORKERS, SOCIAL WELFARE, WELFARE AGENCIES, SUBPROFESSIONALS, MIDDLE CLASS, LOWER CLASS, ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED, JOBS, RECRUITMENT, *MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT, JOB TRAINING, PERSONNEL SELECTION, BOSTON

BECAUSE THERE IS A MANPOWER SHORTAGE IN SOCIAL WORK, THE AUTHOR CONCLUDED THAT INDIGENOUS NONPROFESSIONALS SHOULD BE USED TO PERFORM BOTH TRADITIONAL AND NEW SOCIAL WELFARE FUNCTIONS. THE AUTHOR FELT THAT, ALTHOUGH WIDELY USED, THE TERM "NONPROFESSIONAL" IS INADEQUATE AND IMPLIES THE OCCUPATIONAL STATUS GAP BETWEEN MIDDLE CLASS SUBPROFESSIONALS AND LOWER CLASS AUXILIARIES. THERE IS A NEED FOR A CLASSIFICATION OF THE CAPACITIES AND THE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF THE NONPROFESSIONAL POPULATION AND OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR JOBS. SOCIAL WORK POLICY PLANNING MUST REALISTICALLY RECOGNIZE THE NEED FOR "RISK REDUCTION" RATHER THAN "RISK ELIMINATION" IN THE QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF SERVICE SO THAT IT CAN CONTINUE TO BE GIVEN. THERE ARE FOUR STRUCTURAL FEATURES RELEVANT TO A PROGRAM FOR NONPROFESSIONALS--(1) GOAL FORMULATION, WHOSE OBJECTIVES ARE DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY, PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT, AND STIMULATING INSTITUTIONAL (INTRA-AGENCY) CHANGE, (2) JOB DEVELOPMENT, WHICH INCLUDES THE DEFINITIONS OF ROLES AND FUNCTIONS AT THE ENTRY POINT AND AFTER TRAINING AS WELL AS THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THESE ROLES, (3) RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION, WHICH IS ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT AMONG THE HARD CORE POOR, WHOSE JOB NEEDS ARE GREATEST, AND (4) TRAINING, WHICH IS RELATED TO GOALS AND REQUIRES DEVELOPING A PROGRAM WITH APPROPRIATE METHODS. THIS WORKING PAPER WAS PREPARED FOR THE INSTITUTE ON THE NEW NONPROFESSIONAL, MASSACHUSETTS STATE CONFERENCE OF SOCIAL WELFARE, BOSTON, DECEMBER 2, 1966. (NH)

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education
This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

ED011541

VT 002 913

E

THE NONPROFESSIONAL IN SOCIAL WELFARE: DIMENSIONS AND ISSUES

A Working Paper Prepared for
Institute on the New Nonprofessional
Massachusetts State Conference of Social Welfare
Boston, Massachusetts
December 2, 1966

by

William H. Denham, Associate Director I/C Training
Institute for Youth Studies, Howard University

The purpose of these prepared comments is two-fold: (1) to briefly set forth the main policy themes and assumptions on which current thinking about the nonprofessional in social welfare rests; and (2) to identify the central components in the subject and the pertinent issues. Hopefully, these remarks will serve as a guide for Institute members in their discussion during the day.

Major Policy Themes and Assumptions

Current national projections of requirements for social work manpower suggest that between now and 1975 at least 25,000 new positions will have to be filled in order to provide minimum services to a steadily increasing population.[1]

This increased demand for personnel is probably conservative when measured against the multiplication of services in a variety of federal, state and community programs such as Medicare, urban and neighborhood development, community mental health, Head Start, and the like.

In addition, since many new roles in these fields have yet to be identified or defined, present manpower projections are at

best crude approximations. However, it appears obvious that current manpower recruitment, utilization and training policies are quite inadequate to cope with the rapidly increasing demand for and shortage of trained personnel. Consequently, social work can no longer avoid direct confrontation with the manpower crisis. I would venture to say that unless we can attack this problem more boldly and innovatively than we have done heretofore, we will have to deal with a crisis in public confidence. This may occur on the part of client or consumer groups, especially the poor, who may no longer be as willing to tolerate waiting for service, accepting a second-class product or, in many cases, not receiving service at all.

A number of innovative strategies have been suggested and tried in the past few years in an attempt to find solutions to the manpower problem. One very promising approach that has been suggested in a number of recent experimental and demonstration programs involves the systematic training and utilization of indigenous nonprofessionals for a variety of new jobs in delivering welfare and welfare-related services.[2] It is the indigenous nonprofessional (a term of questionable preciseness as will be indicated below) whom we will be referring to in this paper and in this workshop as the "new nonprofessional." Simply defined, we are talking about an individual, recruited in most instances from the economically impoverished population, to perform a role in which the content includes some proportions of tasks

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE
Office of Education
This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated do not necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

involving the rendering of direct service to clientele. Such tasks represent either functions previously allocated to a professional and/or those not previously performed, or performed in limited fashion, by the professional.

Although current problems related to social welfare manpower are of such magnitude and complexity that no one solution is adequate or can successfully alter a trend that has developed over a number of decades, the indigenous nonprofessional approach offers a number of potential advantages. These include:

1. The possibility of training large numbers of personnel for task-specific roles.

2. Such roles could be created through careful analysis of current roles of professionals, dissection of those tasks for which professionals are "overtrained," and development of jobs for subprofessionals with less training based on these latter tasks. In this way, it has been suggested, professionals could be freed for more highly specialized tasks, such as case diagnosis planning and evaluation, supervision and training, thus amplifying their effectiveness through greater opportunity for using their higher level of education and skills.

3. It could have the consequence of bringing about a long overdue operational and systematic job analysis of traditional direct service roles in social agencies. This, in turn, could stimulate a reorganization of the delivery system of services and hopefully result in greater effectiveness.

4. It offers the possibility of meaningful employment and training to many in the disadvantaged portion of our population in an occupational sector which is strategic both in terms of community demand for services and the needed supply of personnel to render service.

5. Properly planned, the utilization and training of indigenous nonprofessionals can lead to the development

of new lines and ladders for training and vertical mobility toward careers in community services, thus avoiding the dead-end, scut kind of work which often reinforces the sense of despair and helplessness of many unskilled workers of ever being able to enter the mainstream of economically and socially productive employment.

6. Finally, the training and use of local residents holds the promise of providing a unique link between the professional and the agency with the community to be served. Not only may this provide local organizations with untapped sources of community leadership for rendering service, but it can provide an effective vehicle for reaching the hard-to-reach.

In summary, the indigenous nonprofessional concept can be regarded as a social intervention which responds to three major areas of social need: (1) as a strategy for socializing underprivileged persons through training and education for work in health, education and welfare; (2) as a means for training and developing a reservoir of skilled manpower for these chronically short-staffed fields; and (3) as a stimulus for effecting change in service agencies, particularly with respect to a reallocation and redistribution of tasks from the professional role to the nonprofessional role--the goal being to effect improvement in the quality and quantity of service, especially in relation to economically and socially deprived client populations.

There is at present a climate of opportunity for social agencies to undertake projects and experiments involving the indigenous nonprofessional. The Public Service Employment Amendment, popularly labeled the Community Employment Program (CEP), and

introduced by Congressman James Scheuer (Dem., N.Y.) to Section 205-B of H.R. 15111, has recently been enacted into the Economic Opportunity Act for this year. This Amendment provides for the training and utilization of some 30,000 nonprofessional workers by local communities in the fields of education, recreation, welfare, public safety and health. Eighty-eight million dollars has been earmarked to implement the program during the first year of operation.

Workshop Discussion Boundaries

Before considering the principal elements of the nonprofessional subject and the issues thereof, it may be helpful to establish certain givens in order to provide a framework for our workshop group discussions. There are three such givens: (1) the inadequacy of the term nonprofessional; (2) the diversity of the nonprofessional manpower pool; and (3) the inevitability of risk involved in present efforts to determine how nonprofessionals should be used.

Inadequacy of the Term, Nonprofessional

One of the clear implications of the term nonprofessional is to underscore the occupational status gap between those who have professional credentials and those who don't, often irrespective of the problem-solving capability of either. Stratification of occupational titles and authority tend to become ends in themselves, rather than means to the end of increasing quantity and quality of service.

For the middle-class subprofessional this gap is usually temporary. For the working-class nonprofessional, it often becomes permanent. The middle-class oriented case aide in the family agency, or the investigator in a welfare department, usually tolerate this discrepancy while taking the route to graduate education in a school of social work as fast as he or she can make it. Agencies which employ them rationalize such temporary service and high turnover rate by establishing work-study programs or intensifying recruitment from the middle-class subprofessional pool. It is doubtful how much return agencies are receiving for their investment in such auxiliaries, given their powerful vertical occupational strivings and limited time in specific para-professional work roles.

On the other hand, the opportunities for upward educational and occupational mobility which are available to the middle-class subprofessional, are not presently open to the unskilled or semi-skilled lower-class auxiliary, especially the Negro--even though he may be equally, if not more, effective than his counterpart in a task, rather than credentially-oriented problem-solving situation.

It seems to me that really effective use of the nonprofessional will not be realized until agencies develop greater competence in defining service goals in terms of problems to be dealt with and the skills and techniques required to deal with them. It would then be possible to identify the personnel needed who would

be selected primarily on the basis of their capacity to perform essential tasks in the problem-solving process, rather than solely on their place in the occupational hierarchy.

Diversity of the Nonprofessional Manpower Pool

Differential development of agency personnel resources in ac accordance with what a problem takes to be solved or modified is related to the question of just who is the indigenous nonprofessional? There is the tendency in discussing the nonprofessionals, as in discussing impoverished populations, to lump both together in an undifferentiated mass and to attribute the alleged or proven assets and/or liabilities to all members of both groups. While it is laudable to use such an approach in order to promote the blanketing in of the so-called hard core or unreachable, it is analytically and practically unsound in terms of the tasks to be done and the potential or actual human capacities required to do so. Our deprived populations are multi-dimensional as far as the socio-cultural picture is concerned. They may share the common trait of economic poverty and lack of opportunity to realize their potential, but in most other respects they are heterodenous rather than homogenous.

Hylan Lewis and others have strongly suggested that there is a sizeable, if not yet precisely measurable, number of "upwardly mobile poor."[3] These people are clearly identified with middle-class goals and values, have relatively well-developed minds, and are eager for professional careers. At the other end of the scale

are the so-called "hard-core poor"--the unemployed or unskilled; those of relatively low educational achievement and motivation; those who reject or seriously doubt the reality of middle-class goals and means; those for whom our service programs in their present stage of technical development can't reach, or reach ineffectively. As sizeable as this latter group may be, no one knows who or how many constitute the "middle-range poor"--those who fall between the upwardly mobile and hard core. They are likely to be of average academic, technical or skill potential. Are these perhaps the lower middle class of tomorrow who could perform adequately the many technical jobs which are emerging in the field of social welfare as well as in other occupational sectors?

On the other side of the coin, we have the diversity of nonprofessional or paraprofessional jobs. Some, such as counseling, research or teacher aides, may require the job holder to have a certain acquired degree of knowledge, skill and attitudinal development at the high school level or beyond. Others, like a playground assistant or child care auxiliary, may require less equipment, but with potential for growth. Or there may be positions, or permutations of positions, such as homemaker, health or geriatric aides, for which relatively minimal levels of educational and social or occupational development are required for effective job functioning. In short, one of the major tasks in planning for the utilization of nonprofessionals involves the

development of two sets of typologies--one which classifies the nonprofessional population in terms of capacity and potential for development; the other which differentiates the jobs in terms of the tasks to be performed and the knowledge, skill and attitudinal development required.

The Element of Risk

A major obstacle in developing manpower policy in social welfare with respect to auxiliary personnel has been the concern over the risk to the quantity and quality of service rendered. This is of course a legitimate and vital concern to a public-serving profession. However, all too often social work manpower efforts seem to have been directed to eliminating such risk in the here and now, rather than recognizing risk as an inevitable reality in the present stage of development in the field. To what extent the concern with risk elimination has been determined by a preoccupation with the enhancement of the professional establishment or by a commitment to more and better service for the client, particularly the poor client, is a moot point and beyond the immediate purposes of these remarks. It is possible to say, however, that social work is approaching the moment of truth as dictated by this omnipresent reality--that unless we devise new ways for increasing personnel input, more and more clients will have to face the greatest risk--namely, no service at all. Therefore, in planning for the utilization of nonprofessionals, we may

have to shift emphasis from risk elimination to risk reduction, or even risk stabilization. In either case, the paramount goal would be the increase in our capability to deliver and render services to those most in need of them. Various risk reducing or risk stabilizing devices will have to be tried. These include:

--assignment of cases to professionals and nonprofs. based on some system of high-, medium- & low-risk to client classification;[4]

--devising new system for worker accountability and supervision, based on capacity of the individual worker to function on the job; here we might be guided by a continuum ranging from relatively complete autonomy for the professional to varying degrees of supervision and control for the nonprofessional, depending on his equipment and the tasks to be performed,[5]

--utilizing the professional as the diagnostician, case planner or evaluator, perhaps in the context of the service team model wherein both professionals and nonprofessionals perform specific functions;

--developing the capability of the professional worker to play the role of supervisor-trainer of nonprofessionals.

So much for a very general overview of some of the broad themes and assumptions governing the subject of the nonprofessional. Now let us turn to the principal structural elements in the concept and the issues which they present.

Structural Elements in Utilization and Training of Nonprofessionals

For our purposes, we can construct a rough working model composed of the principal attributes involved in any effort directed to the use and development of nonprofessionals in an agency program. I will briefly identify and describe the function of each element and then raise the pertinent issues in the form of questions which members of the Institute may wish to address

themselves to in the ensuing discussion. Each element is not discrete, but rather inter-meshed with the others.

There are four basic attributes in most nonprofessional projects or programs. These are: (1) goal formulation; (2) job development; (3) recruitment and selection and (4) training.

1. Goal Formulation

The importance of a clear statement of the objectives for using nonprofessionals, formulated prior to their introduction has been universally acknowledged, but seldom effected. Such a statement serves to provide a base for decision and action on the other three components of the plan, and helps to define criteria of success on which outcome can be evaluated and facilitates decisions as to future allocation of nonprofessionals in program. Objectives are: employability, employment, institutional change.

a. Employability. To develop the capacity of the indiviual trainee or work recruit to function in the "world of work." It is a socialization process which seeks to promote in the person general attitudes and behavior required to operate in a work setting. Dress, attendance, conduct, responses to supervisory authority, and basic literacy skills are among the major components around which curriculum is designed. Training often tends to have a pronounced rehabilitative character a la the sheltered workshop model. The nonprofessional role in this context is primarily that of a trainee rather than a worker or worker in training. His primary reference point is to the socializing or training agent rather than to a specific work unit in the agency.

b. Employment. Many programs are committed to providing jobs for the unemployed poor. They are conceived of as serving to reduce the volume of unemployment by providing meaningful job opportunities either through the creation of new nonprofessional positions or placement within the agency's existing job supply. Training tends to be job-specific; that is to say it emphasizes acquisition of specific skills and knowledge requisite for performing in a defined job. The nonprofessional role tends initially to be that of an apprentice or worker-trainee and may over time assume the status of regular worker

c. Institutional Change. Although there is considerable agreement within the field on the desirability of using the nonprofessional as an organizational change agent, there is little consensus as to what institutional change consists of and what types of change they can reasonably be expected to influence. We shall, I am sure, be discussing this subject in the Institute. However, it is possible to simply define this objective as one which points to utilizing the nonprofessional in order to bring about some alteration in the pre-existing patterns of an agency's operation. Some illustrations of this would include: increasing the service delivery capacity, absolute increase in manpower pool, effecting a more efficient or effective redistribution of tasks among personnel, revamping service delivery systems, enhancing the agency's image in the community, or reaching the "hard to reach."

In practice, many agencies have tried to combine all three objectives in one package because of the difficulty in making fine conceptual distinctions between them and the tendency to prefer omnibus or umbrella programs which often attempt to be all things to all people, and to the funding agency. We may want to discuss some of the consequences which emerge from a multi-goal approach.

d. Questions

(1) What are the advantages and disadvantages of a multiple vs. single goal approach in the training and utilization of nonprofessionals?

(2) Is it feasible to simultaneously rehabilitate and job train? Which becomes the "tail" or the "dog"?

(3) The nonprofessional as a worker or "institutional change agent"--either or both?

(4) What kinds of change is it realistic to see the nonprofessional as influencing and not influencing?

(5) Are we talking about training the nonprofessional to develop a self-image as a change agent in the agency or that as a consequence of introducing him into the program, certain structural changes will occur?

2. Job Development

Of all the attributes in nonprofessional training and utilization programs, job development, although perhaps the most vital, is most poorly conceptualized, least understood, and in many instances, largely neglected. In part, this is due to such factors as: the lack of clarity with respect to the objectives

as mentio ed in previous section; the fact that it is essentially a planning task calling for skills and knowledge in organizational and occupational role analysis, which amany social workers have not yet mastered. It is safe to say, however, that job development must receive careful consideration in order to avoid,,or at least preclude, the possibility of such negative outcomes as:

--training nonprofessionals for temporary work which will evaporate after the project is ended or when funds run out;

--using nonprofessionals in "scut work" or "make work" roles; this may accommodate the granting agency, temporarily salve the conscience of the employer, but still have the effect of reinforcing worker's sense of isolation from the systen, undercut his motivation for growth and result in no tangible productive return for agency's service;

What, then, are the functions of job development? They include:

Entry job definition, which ensures the worker a specific role and function in the occupational structure--in short, a place and a prescribed set of tasks which can guide his efforts and to which training can be related.

Post-entry job definition which defines the place, role and functions of the nonprofessional subsequent to the initial or entry job period. This points the way to opportunity or channels for advancement within agency structure, thus making it possible for worker to experience job mobility within the agency or, depending on the worker, the opportunity to pursue a career in community service at the professional or advanced technician levels.

Re-examination and restructuring of professional roles as the result of either the creation of new nonprofessional jobs, changes in the content of the professional role because of a factoring out of tasks, or the inclusion or exclusion of new professional tasks such as training or supervision.

Institutionalization of nonprofessional roles--consists of the effort to make such roles legitimate and permanent parts of the occupational structure. It is probably the most complex function in job development because it involves a number of variables, some of which have already been touched on and others which have not. Consequently, there is no one grant formula for institutionalizing nonprofessional roles. It is more likely that a variety of strategies will have to be developed, depending on the agency and program. Such strategies may have to evolve from the analytic models composed of pertinent dimensions such as the following:

--the nature of agency's objectives for using nonprofessionals, i.e., employability of the poor, increasing manpower resources, or reorganizing personnel structures;

--the capacity of agency to change--i.e., the extent to which it is committed to tradition or innovation in staff utilization and program development;

--the kind of nonprofessional population--i.e., the hard-core poor middle-range poor or upwardly-mobile poor;

--the content of nonprofessional role--i.e., to what extent are tasks oriented to the professional role or away from it? or does the role have a high- or low-risk-to-client potential?

--the financial costs involved in nonprofessional salaries and in training and staff development necessary to prepare them for the role;

--the capacity for change of legitimizing agents within and outside the agency--i.e., the extent to which professional staff will accept nonprofessionals in a specific role or the extent to which certifying systems such as Civil Service Commission, can modify personnel policies to allow nonprofessionals to enter and advance within a public agency.

Questions

(1) What realistic job roles can be defined and developed for nonprofessionals in social agencies?

(2) How can such jobs be made permanent rather than temporary?

(3) What provisions and supports need to be provided for upward mobility and advancement? How can we overcome the tendency to "lock in" the nonprofessional at the bottom of the occupational ladder?

(4) How can Civil Service regulations and professional association membership requirements be modified to facilitate entry employment and advancement?

(5) How can valuable professional standards be maintaned?

(6) Is the nonprofessional a threat or an asset to professional salary levels?

3. Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment and selection are concerned with acquiring a pool of candidates and choosing a specific number of them in accordance with objective criteria for specific jobs defined prior to the recruitment and selection process. By and large, most

programs report little difficulty in recruiting adequate numbers of nonprofessional candidates from such typical sources as State Employment Service, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Neighborhood Development Centers and social agencies. A sizeable number of candidates are self-referrals. However, the vast majority of candidates tend to fall in the categories of the upwardly-mobile or middle-range poor. Few programs have succeeded in attracting the hard core,[6] partly because of their inaccessibility to recruitment efforts, but more likely because most available jobs call for a level of socialization or potential for socialization that these persons may not possess. Here we are presented with a major dilemma. On the one hand, there are among the most needy of the unemployed or underemployed; on the other hand, if agencies set goals which envisage the nonprofessional as increasing its manpower potential within existing job structures, it must establish criteria calculated to effect this result. This often means screening out the hard to reach. I might add that even in those programs such as The New Careers Project at Howard University, which originally planned to train primarily the hard-to-reach and least qualified, the job requirements of employing and certifying agencies has served as a major constraint to implementing this open-door policy. This results in a "creaming" of the unemployed pool.

Questions

(1) How can recruitment and selection criteria be developed which would screen in nonprofessional candidates?

(2) How can such criteria be "sold" to employing and certifying agencies? For example, can we develop and promote the acceptance of more functional criteria related to the job to be performed rather than solely to arbitrary standards of age, educational attainment or previous experience?

(3) Do we really mean recruiting and selecting the hard core for job training? Or are we talking about "rehabilitating" them to the point where they are ready for job training?

4. Training

The subject of training goes to the core of the task of nonprofessional utilization and development. It is also central to the problems which the nonprofessional brings to the work experience. Time permits only a cursory review of the principal aspects associated with the training function. Let me, therefore, identify these aspects which are primarily extrapolated from the training experience of the Lincoln Hospital Community Mental Health Program in New York City and the Institute for Youth Studies' New Careers Project at Howard University.[7] These elements pertain primarily to entry jobs and the nonprofessional's initial or early work experience in the agency.

a. Formulation of training goals. This mean that training objectives must be designed to serve the broader purpose for which the nonprofessional is being used by the agency (i.e., employment/employability, organizational change). For example, if the aide is being introduced primarily to increase personnel resources,

training is a means to that end. If, on the other hand, the aim is essentially to socialize or rehabilitate within the context of work experience, then training may become both a means and a goal.

b. Structure of training program. This usually includes the following:

(1) A basic core curriculum designed to equip and develop in the aide trainee the resources required to: understand the system he is to be employed in, conduct himself as an employee in terms of satisfactory work habits, accept supervisory authority, and assume responsibility for the tasks assigned. This might be termed the employability aspect of curriculum content.

(2) A specialty skill component composed of specialized and concretized knowledge and skills requisite for functioning in the particular task-centered role.

(3) Remediation (in some instances included in a package of supportive services) specifically tailored to equip trainee with basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills for use in the particular job.

(4) Supervised teaching in the actual on-the-job situation in relation to the tasks involved in the role which the aide will be expected to perform.

(5) Constant exchange and coordination between trainees and relevant program personnel to enable on-going assessment of trainee performance and training effectiveness.

(6) Provision for training of professionals who are involved in the nonprofessional training process.

(7) Provision for some form of training evaluation which will vary from a systematic attempt to measure program and performance outcomes and the more usual supervisory assessment.

c. Methodology. Training in a large agency, where several nonprofessionals will be working, may be a seperate, highly organized program. In a small facility, it may mean only the professional teaching the nonprofessional his specific job. In either case, there are teaching and supervisory methodololo-gies which are particularly appropriate for indigenous personnel. No matter what the formal training structure, it should include the following elements:

(1) Continuous on-the-job training beginning almost immediately. Long preparatory training is very dangerous because considerable anxiety develops in the nonprofessional until he gets into "action," more than the normal amount of anxiety associated with any new job. Consequently, it is extremely important that he actually begin performing some tasks as soon as possible. These tasks must be carefully phased: the initial assignments must be relatively simple and within the range of nonprofessional skills; as on-the-job training continues, the tasks should be progressively more complex

(2) The use of the group method as the major training technique for teaching content and as a peer group vehicle for group interaction and problem solving by trainees around training and on-the-job related issues.

(3) An activity rather than lecture approach ("do" rather than write), with a heavy emphasis on role playing and role training.[8]

(4) Building strong group solidarity among the nonprofessionals a strong supportive base, and minimizes dangers of imitating the professionals.

(5) Informal individual supervision at any time on request, supplemented by group discussion and supervision.

(6) A down-to-earth teaching style, stressing clarity and detail, and recognizing that concepts and theory, if properly presented, are definitely within the reach of indigenous personnel.

(7) Freedom for the nonprofessional to develop his personal style. Experience in working with nonprofessionals strongly suggests that the worker's personal style is an essential ingredient in the successful performance of his duties.

d. Questions

(1) Is there a definable core of interpersonal skills which can be developed and refined for imparting to the nonprofessional working in a social service program?

(2) Should nonprofessionals be trained to perform counseling functions? If so, what are such functions?

(3) Is there a danger or perhaps it is desirable or inevitable, to"train out" the "indigenous" attribute in the nonprofessional? Can we or should we prevent him from becoming "middle class"?

(4) How can professional social workers learn to communicate with the nonprofessional as a worker, worker-trainee, rather than as a client?

(5) What steps need to be taken by social agencies and schools of social work to equip workers with the skills, knowledge and attitudes requisite for training and utilizing nonprofessionals?

****

These, then, are a few of the themes involved in the subject of the new nonprofessional. They are suggestive, rather than definitive, since the concept is still in its early stages of development. Nevertheless, I hope that these remarks will prove useful stimulii for the day's discussion.

Notes

1. Closing the Gap in Social Work Manpower: Report of Departmental Task Force on Social Work Education and Manpower. Washington, D.C.: Department of HEW, 1965.

2. Jacob R. Fishman, et al., Training for New Careers: The Community Apprentice Program. Washington, D.C.: President's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Crime, June 1965

   M. Herman and S. Sadofsky, Youth Work Programs. New York: Center for Study of Unemployed Youth, New York University School of Social Work, 1966

   A. Pearl and F. Riessman, New Careers for the Poor. New York, N.Y.: Basic Books, 1965

   R. Reiff and F. Riessman, The Indigenous nonprofessional: A Strategy for Change in Community Action and Community Mental Health, National Institute of Labor Education Report #3, 1964

   W. Denham, et al., The Neighborhood Worker: A New Resource for Community Change--A Monograph on Training and Utilization. Washington, D. C.: Institute for Youth Studies, Howard University, 1966

3. H. Lewis, Child Rearing Practices in Working Class Families: Report of a Research Study. Washington, D.C.: Health and Welfare Council of the National Capital Area, 1964.

4. W. Richan, "A Theoretical Scheme for Determining Roles of Professional and Nonprofessional Personnel," Social Work, VI:4, October 1961.

5. P. Levinson and J. Schiller, "Role Analysis of the Indigenous Nonprofessional," Social Work, XI:3, July 1966.

6. Fishman, et al., op. cit.
   Reiff and Riessman, op. cit.

7. Ibid.

8. Role playing is the flexible acting out of various types of situations in a permissive group atmosphere, e.g., a homemaker working with a withdrawn client, a community organizer interviewing a hostile tenant. Most role playing situations are acted out by two people with a group discussion following. Since it is free of the tensions of an actual problem situation, role playing stimulates the trying out of new alternatives and solutions. It increases the participant's role flexibility in an atmosphere where he can safely take a chance with different kinds of behavior. (See Frank Riessman and Jean Goldfarb, "Role Playing and the Poor," Group Psychotherapy, 17:1, March 1964, pp. 36-48.)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.